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defines slavery to be "an obligation to labor for a master, without one's own consent." This obligation, he tells us may arise, *consistently with the law of nature*, from several causes. But whatever is consistent with the law of nature is morally good.

Cicero, in his work (De Legibus) speaking of what is now called natural law, says in substance, that it points us to those actions which, on the one hand, tend to promote the welfare of man, and on the other, those that are destructive of man's real happiness. All actions belonging to the first class he pronounces right; all those in the second category he calls wrong. Nor do the views of modern, ethical writers on this point differ essentially from those of the great Roman moralist. Consequently, in the opinion of Dr. Paley, slavery is not, under all circumstances, "a violation of the universal, everlasting law of rectitude, the infliction of a great, aggravated, unmixed wrong." Such is the opinion of the humble individual now addressing you. And let me assure you, though slavery is a part of the constitution and laws of this state, though slave-labor is from various causes more lucrative than any other that could be employed upon the delta of the Mississippi; though a vast majority of our most enlightened and influential citizens believe it to be right; yet, if I were persuaded of its sinfulness, no fear of man should deter me from asserting my convictions of truth and duty on this subject. I repeat it; if I thought that slavery was wrong, I would express the opinion from this sacred desk, in the most candid, frank and independent manner possible. Dr. Channing in his pamphlet on slavery,



Rev: Mr. Farley **SLAVERY:**
with the author's
regards,
S E R M O N ,

DELIVERED IN THE

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

IN

NEW ORLEANS,

APRIL 15, 1838.

BY THEODORE CLAPP.

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DISCOURSE.

1. *Let whatever christian slaves are under the yoke of unbelievers, pay their own masters all respect and obedience, that the character of God, whom we worship, may not be calumniated, and the doctrine of the gospel may not be evil spoken of, as tending to destroy the political rights of mankind.*

2. *And those christian slaves who have believing masters, let them not despise them, fancying that they are their equals, because they are their brethren in Christ; for though all christians are equal as to religious privileges, slaves are inferior to their masters in station: Wherefore, Let them serve their masters more diligently, because they who enjoy the benefit of their service, are believers and beloved of God. These things teach; and exhort the brethren to practice them.*

3. *If any one teach differently, by affirming that under the gospel slaves are not bound to serve their masters, but ought to be made free, and does not consent to the wholesome commandments which are our Lord Jesus Christ's, and to the doctrine of the Gospel, which in all points is conformable to true morality,*

4. *He is puffed up with pride, and knoweth nothing, either of the Jewish or of the Christian revelation, although he pretends to have great knowledge of both: but is distempered in his mind about idle*

questions and debates of words, which afford no foundation for such a doctrine, but are the source of envy, contention, evil speakings, unjust suspicions that the truth is not sincerely maintained.

5. Perverse disputings carried on contrary to conscience, by men wholly corrupted in their mind and destitute of the true doctrine of the gospel, who reckon whatever produces most money is the best religion; from all such impious teachers—withdraw thyself, and do not dispute with them. (Commentary of James Macknight, D. D. on the first five verses of the sixth chapter of St. Paul's First Epistle to Timothy.)

I BEGIN with a definition of Slavery. Let us form, if possible, a clear and precise idea of the term. We all know that a talented and disingenuous man may conceal truth, and build up error, by the use of equivocal, perplexed, and mysterious combinations of speech. Vague, general, indefinite terms and statements have deluged the moral and theological world with cavilings, doubts, misapprehension and falsehood. In the present discourse, without aiming to address the imagination, or feelings—to make what is commonly denominated a display of eloquence—I shall simply endeavor to exhibit a statement of my views on a solemn and interesting subject, in the most unambiguous and explicit language possible.

William Paley, D. D., a celebrated divine and philosopher of England, has written a work on the subject of morals, which is used as a text-book in the higher schools and colleges throughout our Union. In the part on Relative Duties, that illustrious author

defines slavery to be "an obligation to labor for a master, without one's own consent." This obligation, he tells us may arise, *consistently with the law of nature*, from several causes. But whatever is consistent with the law of nature is morally good.

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says (p. 105)—“In the slave-holding states, freedom of speech is at an end. Whoever should express among them the sentiments respecting slavery which are universally adopted through the civilized world, would put his life in jeopardy; would probably be flogged or hung.” I admire Dr. Channing; I honor him as one of the best men living; I regard him as an author pre-eminently distinguished, who has already done more, with his pen, for the cause of pure christianity than any other American; and who, whatever may now be thought of him, will occupy a higher place, in the judgment of succeeding generations, than any of his illustrious contemporaries on either side of the Atlantic. This is saying a great deal. There is no material, important point in regard to which I should like to be found in opposition to the venerable Doctor. But nothing can be more incorrect than the view he has expressed concerning freedom of speech in the slave-holding states. In New Orleans, any minister of acknowledged worth and ability, may utter what he pleases from the pulpit with perfect impunity. The spirit of toleration cherished and exercised in our city is peculiar, extraordinary, unparalleled. The inhabitants of New Orleans are more magnanimous, noble, and forbearing towards those who differ from them in political and religious matters, than can be found on any other spot in the civilized world. I go so far as to say, that Dr. C. might visit us, and preach his celebrated pamphlet on slavery in this very church, without putting his life in jeopardy; without running the risk of being mobbed, flogged or hung. However obnoxious

the sentiments which he might express on the appropriate theatre of his professional movements, he would be listened to with profound, respectful attention ; be received into society in the most kind, courteous, civil manner, and be repelled by no other than the christian weapons of truth and love, persuasion and entreaty.

From this digression let us return to the grand question before us. Is Slavery under all circumstances sinful. If it be, let the whole civilized world unite, without delay to banish it from the earth. Let no voice of man plead, for its continuance. Let no human arm be stretched out for its support. Let every pulpit in Christendom frown upon it. The influence of the Church like that of its infinite Author, should always be exerted, in favor of the eternal principles of justice, truth, humanity and mercy. It is a dreadful spectacle to see the pulpit lending its heaven-derived powers, for the nefarious purpose of enslaving, injuring, or degrading any portion of the human family, however inconsiderable in numbers, however obscure or despicable in the estimation of the world, at large. For the sacred desk was created to advance the cause of morality, to promote the good of all, to aid in emancipating all men from the fetters of ignorance and sin, and conferring on them the inestimable benefits of knowledge, power, freedom and virtue. Duty with me is every thing. I endeavour to preach and live on the principles suggested by the following beautiful words from Channing on Slavery.—The right is the supreme good, and includes all other goods. In seeking and adher-





supreme devotedness to the interests of truth, freedom and humanity. Their bosoms were animated with a philanthropy not circumscribed by the narrow boundaries of the clan, tribe, or people to which they belonged; but that looked forward, in prophetic vision, to the general amelioration of human society, the exaltation of our guilty and afflicted race to knowledge, virtue and happiness. They are represented in the New Testament, by our Lord and his apostles, as enriched with every virtue that can adorn and bless humanity, as models to be admired and imitated by all men to the end of time. The character of these men is a sufficient evidence that slavery was not in their day an "heinous, scandalous sin," an infraction of man's most "sacred and infallible rights."

Besides, we read in the book of Genesis that God showed his approbation of Abraham's character and conduct, by raising him to an extraordinary degree of temporal prosperity. God, says the sacred historian, gave to the patriarch lands, flocks, herds, silver, gold, camels, *bond-men* and *bond-women*. Here we see God, dealing in slaves; giving them to his own favorite child—a man of superlative worth—and as a reward for his eminent goodness. But can God bestow in the shape of a present what is in itself, and under all circumstances, a great moral evil? Is such a supposition consistent with his character? Suppose an earthly parent should give to an amiable, accomplished son, as a testimony of his peculiar affection, what he foreknew would inevitably plunge this child in guilt, disgrace, or absolute destruction.—

Could you be made to believe in the parental love of such a father? But the same God, who gave Abraham sunshine, air, rain, earth, flocks, herds, silver and gold, blessed him with a donative of slaves. The gifts of the Creator are like his character, good; uniformly good, and only good. Therefore slavery in Abraham's time was a wise, righteous and beneficent institution.

Once more: It is universally conceded, that the patriarchs lived under a form of government that theologians characterize by the term theocracy. They were governed by the immediate direction of God alone. By the oracle of Jehovah himself their laws were enacted. It is certain, then, that these laws were good; that they sanctioned nothing but what was right, all things considered. But slavery was a part of these laws, and this fact furnishes conclusive evidence of a divine authority for the institution.

Again, in the twenty-fifth chapter of Leviticus, we find the following words, "and the Lord spake unto Moses in Mount Sinai—that solemn ground where the moral law was promulgated—"saying, both thy bondmen and bond-maids, which thou shalt have, shall be of the heathens that are among you." In this passage the Creator recognizes the rectitude of holding slaves, in that part and period of the world, by marking out the class of people from among whom it was lawful for the Jews to obtain them. If it be said, that these "*bondmen and bondmaids*" were not slaves—not property, but men and women, hired only for a special limited term of service: I reply that the question of their slavery is settled by the sentence, which

says "of them shall you buy bondmen and bond women. The Rev. James Smylie, of Mississippi, in a pamphlet on this subject suggests, that the Jews seem not to have been left to their own option, in this matter. The words partake of the nature of an order, or direction, "of them *ye shall buy*," &c. clearly establishing the fact of a divine authority for the institution. But on this point the language of revelation is still more precise and explicit; "Moreover of the children of the strangers that do sojourn among you, of them shall you buy; and of their families that are with you, which they begot in your land, and they shall be your possessions. And ye shall take them as an inheritance for your children after you, to inherit them by possession. They shall be your bond men for ever.

What language could more explicitly show, not only that God tolerated slavery among the Jews, but gave them a written permit to *buy, hold, and bequeath* men and women to perpetual servitude. I repeat it, if there be any truth in the 25th chapter of Leviticus, it clearly and unequivocally establishes the fact that bondage was sanctioned by God himself, and that buying, selling, holding and bequeathing slaves as property, are matters concerning which, the Almighty Parent was pleased to establish rules or laws, in a supernatural communication of his will to the most enlightened and virtuous nation of the ancient world.

But we are told, that there was no such thing among the Jews as slavery for life; that on every returning Jubilee all bond-men and bond women were manumitted. This is an error. In the 21st chapter of Exodus, it is decreed that when the master gave to a Jewish

slave a wife, should that slave, at the expiration of seven years, be disposed to go free, he might do so; but the wife and children were to remain in servitude. Should he, nevertheless, from attachment to his master, and to his wife and children, be unwilling to go out free; then, after being brought before the Judge and having his ear bored through with an awl, he should serve his master for ever; that is for life. Widely different are the regulations for slaves not of Hebrew extraction. Neither they, nor their children are to go out at the Jubilee; they shall be your bondmen forever. Read the 44th, 45th and 46th verses of Leviticus, 25th chapter. These verses contain an exact description of slavery as it exists in Louisiana, and the Southern States generally. The children of the strangers, i. e. the Africans, are freely bought and sold among us. They become, our "*possessions*." Our children receive these possessions by inheritance, and will transmit them in like manner to their descendants; and this state of things is to last *forever*; i. e. for that indefinite period, during which, the relations of society, now existing among us, will be continued.

It may be said that the regulations among the Hebrews were intended to be temporary—to last only till the day when all the ceremonial rites of the Jews were abolished. If this should even be admitted, one position is yet clear, that there was a time, when God gave a written permission to his own dear people to hold some of their neighbours in bondage.—There was a time when slavery was not an heinous, scandalous sin, a violation of the eternal law of rectitude, the infliction of a great, tremendous wrong.

What was once right may be again right; may be now right; may be right to the end of time among some portions of the human race, and in some parts of the civilized world.

A pamphlet was, some time ago, sent to us through the Post office, by an anonymous, but very learned author, which attempts to prove, that the servitude prescribed by Moses was not compulsory, but voluntary; that servants among the Jews were paid a regular stipend; and that they were not the legal property of their masters. But such an attempt is ridiculously vain. It is certain that slavery was permitted by the Jewish law-giver Moses. Jahn, in a book on Hebrew antiquities, a work of great erudition, and high authority, thus writes—"Moses, though he saw the evils of slavery, was not in a condition to abolish it, and it would not have been wise in him to have made the attempt. He accordingly permitted the Hebrews to possess foreigners, both male and female, in the character of slaves. Both the food and clothing of those, who from any cause, whatever it might be, had lost their freedom, were of the poorest description. All their earnings went to their master, and their labor was worth to him double that of a merely hired servant. They commonly had the consent of their masters to marry, or rather to connect themselves with a woman in that way, which is called by a Latin law term, *contubernium*. The children that proceeded from this sort of marriages, were the property, not of their parents, but of their owners." Calmet, a Roman Catholic author of pre-eminent ability, and quoted as such by all Protestant writers, says—"Moses

notices two or three sorts of slaves, obtained by capture, by purchase, or born in the house. Over these the masters had an entire authority; they might sell them, exchange them, punish them, judge them, and even put them to death, without public process." Even Miss Harriet Martineau admits that slavery was an institution of the Mosaic economy; that like the Roman Catholic religion it was *once* useful; but that in these latter days of light and glory, the system is entirely injurious and oppressive in its tendencies. Let any one read impartially the 25th chapter of Leviticus, and he will then find no difficulty in making up his mind as to the question, whether the Jewish law tolerated slave holding. I shall, therefore, say nothing further on this point. No one is so obtuse as not to see, that if men were permitted by God in the time of Moses to hold slaves, then it may be right for them to do it now; unless this privilege has been revoked by a succeeding revelation, or by some change in the condition and circumstances of society which render its further continuance indubitably a moral wrong.

Let us inquire, for a moment, in what manner the abolitionists endeavor to dispose of the fact that slavery is sustained by the principles of religion taught in the Old Testament. "They tell us that Moses, *for the hardness of their hearts*, suffered the Jews to retain an institution, in itself sinful. The Jewish law-giver was endowed with superlative wisdom: he knew that laws, to be of any practical value, must be accommodated to the condition and habits of the people to whom they are given. Moses found the Jews

thoroughly imbued with certain sinful habits and customs, common to all other nations around them. He foresaw that all efforts to eradicate these evils would be in vain. As becomes a wise lawgiver he, therefore, adopted them into his system, subject to such restrictions and limitations as he thought best adapted to counteract their pernicious tendency.— Such evils were polygamy, divorce, and slavery. The latter abomination he found universal and tyrannical among all nations. He modified and softened it—gave privileges and rights to the servants—restrained cruelty and oppression in the master, but did not wholly forbid it." Wonderful! Moses was raised up, and divinely commissioned to teach the Jews to walk in *all* the commandments and statutes of the Lord, blameless. But in the prosecution of his enterprise, he ascertained that the Hebrews were so fixed and obstinate in certain forms of depravity, that they could, by no motives, be induced to renounce them. He therefore adopted the plan of a moral and religious government, which should prohibit such sins only as might probably be suppressed, and lend its countenance to those that were deemed incorrigible. Was there ever a more wretched subterfuge than this? Is it not the vilest of sophisms? In what light does such a position place the character of Moses? What was he, if this be true, more than a cunning, sagacious, unprincipled temporiser? Let him not be classed with the good and holy of times and ages gone by.

I can conceive of nothing more nefarious than the character of that moral teacher, who permits, or al-

lows what he knows to be wrong, in accommodation to the taste of a licentious, wicked age or people. If this account be true, I agree with Mr. Thomas Paine's remarks in the Age of Reason—"That the character of Moses, as stated in the Bible, is the most horrid, that can be imagined. He sanctioned the most unexampled atrocities, that are to be found in the history of sin! Among the detestable villains that in any period of the world have disgraced the name of man, it is impossible to find a greater than Moses." What I ask can be more detestable, than, for one, professedly acting in the name and authority of Almighty God, to permit a people to buy, hold and bequeath human beings to perpetual bondage, when at the same time he was convinced that such a practice was immoral, oppressive and unjust.

Suppose that Jesus Christ had appeared in Sparta, instead of Judea, and at a time when its inhabitants were under the laws of Lycurgus. Suppose further, that he should have given to the Spartans a code of morality, allowing theft under certain restrictions and limitations. Would it be a valid defence of the code and its author to allege that Jesus found the inhabitants of Laconia so thoroughly imbued with thievish habits and customs, that they could not be brought duly to respect the rights of property, and therefore, with infinite wisdom, he permitted them to go on stealing, but under such modifications as promised to reduce the evil to the least possible quantity? Such a question exhibits its own answer. The truth is, there is no law, rule, or principle of action allowed by Moses or Jesus, which, at the time, and under all the

circumstances was not conformable to true morality. Deny this position, and you can no longer defend the divine authority of the Scriptures. You must surrender them up into the hands of their enemies.

II. Is Slavery condemned, or prohibited, in the New Testament?

We have already shown that it was a part of the moral code established by Moses. Did our Saviour change, or abolish any part of this code? I think not. The principles of morality, are, like their infinite Author, immutable. They are no more susceptible of change than the principle of gravitation—the law that regulates the germination and growth of vegetables, or the power which moves and retains the celestial bodies in their orbits. If there were any essential discrepancy between the moral systems of the Old and New Testaments—if what is affirmed in one to be right, is in the other declared to be wrong—it follows that truth, justice and kindness are not the same in all times and places; but that they are continually undergoing important changes to adapt themselves to the ever-varying scenes of human life. This, it seems to me is a conclusion, that no reflecting mind can adopt.

But our Saviour has settled this point by an explicit, un-ambiguous declaration. Think not that I am come, says he, in the 5th chapter of Matthew, to destroy the law, or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but fulfil. For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. What

law is here spoken of? I answer, not the rituals, but the morality taught by Moses and the prophets. This is the interpretation given to these words by every commentator that I have examined. It is the only one that suits the subject, or context. I came not, says Jesus, to destroy, but to fulfil the code of morals sanctioned by your own Scriptures. This code ordained slavery. That is in regard to the rectitude of bondage, the New Testament accords with the Old.

At the time our Saviour appeared and commenced his public labors, Slavery was universal among the Jews. If it had been, in his opinion, a monstrous evil—the greatest of wrongs,—a thing clearly criminal and irreligious,—must he not have condemned it without qualification or reserve? If the modern doctrine be sound, Jesus should have said to the master, “your slave is your equal;” “you must immediately set him at liberty;” “you cannot justly hold property in man;” “it is wicked in the sight of God for you to do so;” “it is an infringement of the natural rights of the slave.” Not a syllable analogous to this was uttered by our Saviour. If the institution were wrong; if it were a scandalous sin; if it were a daring outrage upon the first principles of right and freedom—an object of divine disapprobation—could our Saviour, with the evidences of such a flagrant abuse all around him, have remained in silence on such a momentous subject, without pursuing a course revolting to every candid, honest mind, and glaringly inconsistent with one grand object of his mission—the exemplification, and complete establishment of a

perfect system of morals. It will be admitted by all that Jesus was a bold, uncompromising teacher. He was not deterred from asserting truth by the fear of man. Whatever he believed to be immoral—wicked—he uniformly opposed, in the plainest terms, and with unyielding firmness. Exact truth and spotless rectitude were obviously the standard of all his instructions, as well as of his life. Under these circumstances, the silence of our Saviour—the declaration that he came not to “destroy the law”—a law that ordained slavery—but to fulfil it to the last jot and tittle;—the fact that the old and the new dispensations harmonize in all the essential principles of justice and morality, afford the highest presumptive evidence, that the Saviour of the world did not intend, directly or indirectly, to condemn slavery; and that what was practised in the earlier ages of the world, with the sanction of the divine will, was not regarded by him as incompatible with christian principles and character.

Whatever was taught by the inspired apostles, is regarded by all christians as of equal authority with those instructions which emanated from the Saviour himself during his personal ministry. What doctrines did they inculcate on the subject before us? “*Slaves*,” says St. Peter, “*be subject to your masters, with all fear*, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. For this is thankworthy, if a man, for conscience towards God, endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if, when you are buffeted for your faults, you take it patiently? but if, when you do well, and suffer for it, you take it

patiently, this is acceptable to God." Paul, in his first epistle to the Corinthians, says—"Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he is called." "Art thou called, being a slave, care not for it." "Abide in your condition of slavery. Think not that christianity proposes to release your obligations to your master. These obligations must be strictly observed and fulfilled."

"It is very probable (remarks Adam Clark) that some of the slaves at Corinth, who had been converted to christianity, had been led to think that their christian privileges absolved them from the necessity of continuing slaves; or at least brought them on a level with their christian masters. It was, therefore, a very proper subject for the Apostle to interfere in; and to his authority the persons concerned would doubtlessly respectfully bow."

Again, says Paul in his first epistle to Timothy, "Let as many slaves as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honor, that the name of God and his doctrines be not blasphemed."

The epistle to Philemon was written by Paul, while a prisoner at Rome. Philemon was a slave-holder, residing at Colosse, a town of Phrygia, in Asia Minor. Onesimus, a fugitive slave belonging to Philemon, was converted to the christian religion at Rome, under the ministry of Paul. The apostle sends him back to Colosse, with a letter to his owner; in which he entreats Philemon not to punish Onesimus with severity, but to treat him in future as a reformed and faithful slave.

"From this epistle, (says Macknight) we learn

that all christians are on a level. **Onesimus**, the slave, on becoming a christian, is the apostle's son and Philemon's brother. It is further evident, that christianity makes no alteration in men's political state ; **Onesimus**, the slave, did not become a free-man by embracing christianity, but was still obliged to be Philemon's slave forever, unless his master gave him his freedom. This portion of Sacred Writ decides, that slaves should not be taken nor detained from their masters, without their master's consent." Paul did not suggest to Philemon the duty of emancipating **Onesimus**, but encouraged him to restore the slave to his former condition, with the hope, that acting under the influence of the holy principles of christianity, he would in future serve his master, "not with eye service," as formerly, "but in singleness of heart, fearing God."

Nothing can be found in the New Testament opposite to the tenor and spirit of the above quotations. The object of Christ and his apostles, was magnificent beyond all parallel—beyond all comprehension. In their public, official stations, as teachers of a new divine religion they countenanced no selfish, no sordid, no mercenary principles. They never lost sight of the claims of perfect rectitude and unblemished integrity. They aimed at nothing less than the general amelioration of human society, the exaltation of our guilty and afflicted race to knowledge, virtue, and happiness. In the prosecution of this single purpose, they did not intermeddle with politics. They did not turn aside to inculcate revolutionary sentiments, or measures. They said nothing about any kind of

emancipation, except that, which consists in deliverance from the bondage of sin. When they found a man a master, instead of endeavoring to unsettle the relation between him and his slaves, the effort was to make the master a good christian, knowing that if the principles of the gospel were acted upon by all men, the *evils* of slavery would be banished from the earth, and that then the relation itself, instead of being a curse, would prove to be an infinite blessing to all concerned.

With reference to those portions of the New Testament already alluded to, and others of a similar import, the following remarks are earnestly recommended to the attention of all candid inquirers :

1st. No passage has as yet been adduced from the gospel amounting to a plain, palpable and explicit prohibition of slavery. It is conceded that none such can be found. But we are told, that the spirit of christianity,—the spirit of the precepts—“Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself;” “therefore, all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them:” is a virtual condemnation of slavery, and should awaken in the bosom of every man the solemn conviction, that it is a grievous wrong to human nature. Or, in other words, christian philanthropy requires the immediate emancipation of slaves.

To my mind, this reasoning is utterly fallacious. It is a sophistry too bare-faced to mislead the judgment of a child. Unanswerable evidence that the spirit of the command—“Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself,” does not, under all circumstances,

forbid slavery, is furnished by the Scriptures themselves. For, when God said to the Jews, you must love your neighbors as yourselves, he told them at the same time, and in the same breath, that they might subject men and women to perpetual servitude. (See Leviticus, 19-18 and 25-45.) It has pleased our Heavenly Father thus to place beyond all controversy the possibility of exercising christian love to a fellow-being whom we hold in slavery. In the New Testament, also, we are commanded to treat all men as brethren, as children of the same Father; as possessing the same spiritual rights and privileges, in those very chapters which afford the most positive and un-ambiguous authority for the institution of slavery. If you say, the master cannot manifest christian love to one whom he holds in bondage, you take a position, diametrically opposite to the word of God. For the Bible tells the master, that all his conduct towards his servant must be in conformity with the pure and generous sentiments of christian philanthropy; and at the same time, it bids the slave not to rebel and rise against his master, upon the ground that christianity confers on all the same political rights and privileges.

Doctor Channing himself admits, that many slave-holders are bright examples of private virtue and christian love. Hear his own words—"There are masters who have thrown off the natural prejudices of their position, who see slavery as it is, and who hold on to the system from disinterested considerations; and these deserve great praise. They believe, that emancipation, in the present condition of

society, would bring unmixed evil on bond and free ; they think themselves bound to continue the relation, until it shall be dissolved by comprehensive, and systematic measures of the state. There are many of them who would shudder, as much as we, at reducing a freeman to bondage, but who are appalled by what seem to them the perils and difficulties of liberating multitudes, born and brought up to that condition. There are many, who nominally holding the slave as property, still hold him for his own good and for the public order, and would blush to retain him on any other grounds. Are such men to be set down among the unprincipled!"

This is an accurate account of the views and feelings entertained by a great majority of slave-holders in Louisiana. They hold the African in bondage for his own *good* and the *public order*. They cannot do otherwise, as it seems to them, without proving recreant to the pure principles of justice and humanity. To set them free, would be to involve them in speedy and remediless destruction. It would be equivalent to deliberate and cold blooded murder. We have no more right at present, acting upon christian principles, to emancipate our slaves, than we have to put them to death by poisoning, shooting, drowning, or burning. The taking care of them, has been devolved upon us as a solemn duty by our ancestors, and I may add, by Almighty Providence. We can devise no way of fulfilling this obligation apart from the further continuance of the present system of bondage.

2d. The New Testament decides in the plainest terms, that christians are bound to acquiesce in, and

support, those laws and regulations concerning slavery, which are enacted by the respective civil governments under which they live. The legislature must determine who shall be kept in bondage, and what shall be their condition and privileges. The pulpit must not interfere in this important and delicate matter. It is conceded, that christian teachers are called on to discuss and recommend those principles of justice and humanity, which every legislator should supremely reverence, while acting in reference to the public good. But, let not the character of the clergyman be merged in that of the politician. Let him at all times, preach unconditional submission to civil laws and institutions. This was his duty under the Roman government, 1800 years ago—a government infinitely more despotic, tyrannical, and oppressive, than any now in existence.

Christian philanthropists should have unlimited confidence in our purely elective and representative system of government. When the superior power ; when all the honors, trusts, and sway of society are in the hands of a despot, or a minority of nobles ; it is easy to see that the people have no safeguard against rapacity, injustice and oppression : but when the power of making, abolishing and administering the laws is intrusted by a written constitution to a majority of the people, it is obvious that the rights and happiness of all who live under these laws are as safe as they can be, without the constant miraculous interposition of divine Providence. It does appear to me, that a government purely elective, in case it should ever operate injuriously upon any considerable number within its influence, must, by its own in-

herent tendency, apply, in time, that corrective which circumstances demand. A free people, if prompted by no other principle than that selfishness which is a part of man in all possible vicissitudes of his earthly existence, will, from choice adopt, and in season too, the requisite measures to counteract or remove the evils of injudicious laws and corrupt institutions. In a free country, upright, generous, pure, disinterested principles must of necessity triumph over those which are narrow, selfish and unrighteous.

In other words, the legislators of Louisiana say, that in their judgment, the good of the Africans living in their borders, as well as the prosperity of the commonwealth, require that for the present they should be kept in a state of bondage. They think experience has demonstrated that this class of our population are so weak, imbecile and inefficient, as to be absolutely incapable of self-government. Consequently, they feel it to be a duty to take the government of them into their own hands, and to give their labor to masters for life, under certain restrictions, as a just remuneration for the protection and maintenance secured to them by law. Now, I say, upon the supposition, that the principle assumed by our legislators in regard to the Africans among us is an unrighteous one, its iniquity will, in time, without foreign interference, be made apparent to the majority of our inhabitants, by its deleterious results upon their happiness. And so soon as a people ascertain from experience, that a particular law or institution operates to their disadvantage, they will of their own accord abandon it. I cannot go into an elucidation

of the principles of reasoning here suggested. I will only remark, that if all which the abolitionists affirm about the wrong of slavery be true, it is my solemn conviction, that the speediest way of destroying it is to let the slaveholding states go on quietly in their present course, till its evils thickening and increasing at every step of their future progress, shall become sufficiently palpable and alarming to arouse all those concerned to a just sense of their danger and responsibilities. This is an evil which, under a free form of government, will work out its own cure.

3d. In reply to the fact, that the New Testament does not condemn slavery, some writers have had recourse to a sophism, that may be thus stated—"The apostles gave no direct testimony against slavery, because such a course would have exposed them to the danger of being assailed and crushed by the Roman government." In other words, it would have been bad policy, extremely imprudent in Paul, to have condemned slavery, when such a condemnation could have done no good, but would have served to put in jeopardy his life, and the success of that religion, whose cause he had espoused.

What a miserable subterfuge! Was Paul afraid of being put to death? Let his bold, intrepid, uncompromising adherence to truth and duty, amid the unprecedented perils constantly attendant on his public life, furnish the answer. Or, was Paul afraid of arraying against the new religion which he advocated, the power of Rome, by condemning one of its immoral institutions, of a political aspect? Who can be-

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lieve this : the supposition is contradicted by historical facts.

It is certain that Paul did attack the religion of Rome, to which the inhabitants were as strongly attached, as they could have been to slavery. Polytheism was the religion of the Roman empire in the apostle's day—polytheism, sustained by myriads of temples and myriads of priests—swaying its mighty sceptre from the Tiber to the ends of the earth. Legislators, magistrates, philosophers, orators, and poets, all combined to plead her cause, and protect her from insult and injury. Now, Paul was *actually imprudent enough* to attack this religion—venerated as it was for its antiquity, admired as divine, triumphantly seated in the affections of a superstitious people, and upheld by the consolidated millions of the most learned, cunning, bold and powerful of the Roman nation, when in the zenith of her glory. What a fearful odds ! In this respect, he took a position, which he must have foreseen would raise to the highest pitch all the opposition which the then civilized world could bring to bear upon him, or the new religion that he was commissioned to preach. After this, there was nothing more to deter him from saying what he thought was right, even had he been actuated by selfish considerations alone. It is ridiculous to say that he, who ventured on the hazardous enterprise of demolishing the venerated fabric of Roman superstition, was too timid to utter a sentence of denunciation against slavery.

Besides, the sophism above mentioned ascribes to the apostle a character which every high-minded,

honest man must reprobate—the character of an unprincipled temporiser and time-server. It has been said with truth, that when Paul lived “there were sixty millions of slaves in the Roman empire, under the absolute, irresponsible control of masters, whose character the pen of inspiration has portrayed, by saying, that they were full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malice, whisperers, back-biters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful.” Now, the apostle looked out upon these sixty millions of people—wretched in the extreme—in the horizon of whose prospects there was not discoverable one cheering ray of hope. A people, over whose doom neither themselves nor others could discover any thing less than one unbroken cloud of despair. Sixty millions, in whose bosoms had expired the hope that they could ever obtain justice, either by trial, appeal, or redress. Now, in view of their doleful condition, the apostle, actuated by the cunning, cautious policy of the world, and the dread of secular power, declined urging upon christian masters the obligations of philanthropy, and the duty of immediate emancipation. He only said: servants (that is slaves, as all admit the meaning of the original to be) *be subject to your masters in all things*; and masters, *treat your servants in a just, kind and christian manner*. The sophism before alluded to supposes Paul’s private sentiments on the subject of slavery to be directly contrary to the tenor of his public instructions. In his heart he condemns, while

his lips approve. If so, he was one of the worst men that ever lived.

4th. It is affirmed that, whatever may be the language of the New Testament, its spirit is undoubtedly hostile to slavery. That is, in words the christian law tolerates, and approves a certain practice, while its spirit is opposed to it. But the spirit of a law can never be opposed to the plain, positive and unambiguous meaning of its words. The criminal code of Louisiana forbids theft in the plainest terms possible. Suppose a lawyer should endeavor to screen his client from the crime of stealing, by the plea, that our code prohibits theft in words, but tolerates it in spirit. The precept of the code reads—"Thou shalt not steal;" but it is pervaded by a subtil, invisible, ethereal spirit, which the transcendental few only can comprehend, which says—"Thou mayest steal." The words of the Bible read, "thou art permitted to hold slaves;" the spirit of the Bible runs counter to this, and affirms that "thou art not permitted to hold slaves." Admirable! How ingenious! How profound! How much above the comprehension of obtuse, unrefined minds!

5th. It is alleged, that there are many doctrines and principles revealed in the scriptures, whose adaptations and applications could be understood and carried into effect only by degrees, as human nature should be gradually improved and human society gradually advanced in knowledge and civilization. For example, enmity to slavery was always essentially a part of the christian religion; but it lay, as it were, folded up and undeveloped like a plant in its seed,

waiting for the season to call it into light and action.

It is hard for me to affix any clear, definite ideas to these words. Are we to understand, that the mass of the people living in the time of the apostles were too ignorant to comprehend the nature of slavery? Their instructions on this theme, show conclusively, that it was even in that distant day generally discussed and thoroughly understood. For (as Adam Clark says) antecedently to the date of Paul's second epistle to the Corinthians, the converted slaves at Corinth had started the theory, that their christian privileges absolved them from the necessity of continuing slaves. How did Paul treat this new-fangled notion? He reprobated it in the plainest and strongest terms. He says "let slaves serve their masters more diligently, than formerly, because, they who enjoy the benefit of their service are believers and beloved of God." Besides, the nature of the case speaks for itself. There never was a people so rude and benighted, as not be able to comprehend the relation of master and servant, and the duties growing out of this relation, with the same ease that they could discern the difference between a circle and a square, or between truth and falsehood.

Or, is it meant that the New Testament contains doctrines concerning bondage, which have been manifested, for the first time, by the new lights and teachings of the present age; where are they to be found? Let some body do us the favor to name the chapter and verse which contain them. Nothing can be more indubitable than the position, that it does

not belong to christianity—it is not consistent with its spirit—to interfere with, or abolish any of the relations of life existing at its first promulgation, for the control of which either Christ or his apostles have prescribed regulations. They regulated the duties between ruler and subject, parent and child, husband and wife. These relations must continue to the end of time. The same may be said of that between master and slave. It is equally clear, that if the apostles had considered slavery in itself to be sinful, they never would have alluded to the institution, but to denounce it. They would have dismissed the theme, with one sweeping sentence of condemnation;—as a thing utterly proscribed and accursed,—as making no part of the christian religion, and as incapable of having any connexion with it. It is certain, that the apostles never laid down, or enacted any laws for the regulation of vice. The inference is obvious. Christianity attempts to remove the evils of slavery—not by destroying the relation, but by enforcing the duties. Obedience to parents cannot exist, if you abolish the relation of parent and child. Masters cannot, according to the command of Christ, render to their slaves that which is just and equal, if you abolish the relations; for then they will cease to be masters. Abolish any of the relations for which regulations are provided in the New Testament, and, in effect, you abolish some of the laws of Christ. To succeed then in putting down every thing like servitude, you must annihilate the word of God.

When assailed for holding our fellow-beings in bondage,—when denounced as “heinous and scan-

dulous sinners," "robbers," "tyrants," "thieves," "oppressors and monsters"—it is enough for us, without "rendering railing for railing," calmly to reply, that we are fully convinced of the rectitude of slavery: we can have no doubts about the matter, when those who were divinely commissioned to teach us a pure and perfect religion, have expressly allowed and sanctioned it.

III. The abolitionists appeal with great, seeming confidence to what they style, the decisions of reason. We are told that there are a multitude of truths in the department of ethics, which are not particularly mentioned in the scriptures. "The Bible presupposes in the persons to whom it is addressed a knowledge of the principles of natural justice." Now the sinfulness of slavery (say our opponents) is one of those obvious and acknowledged truths, taught by reason, observation and experience. Slavery is condemned by the universally admitted doctrine, "that all men are created equal: that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of human happiness."

1st. Let us attend, for a moment, to the meaning of the proposition, that all men are created equal. True, in many respects, all men have the same attributes, rights, condition and privileges. This is self-evident. But the opposite proposition is not a whit the less obvious, that all men are created unequal. Such are the constitution of man and the laws of nature, that no two members of society can be

found who are not characterized by indelible distinctions. One differs from his neighbor in the natural endowments of body and mind; another possesses superior advantages, originating in some of the endlessly diversified and indescribable circumstances of education and employment; a third, from the cradle to the tomb, is never permitted to know the honor and responsibilities of self-government. From birth to death, he is as helpless and dependant as a child. Imbecility of constitution, the malignant power of some accident or disease, may have doomed him to perpetual and unavoidable servitude. The same remarks are applicable to nations, as well as individuals.

Even the celebrated Rousseau—an enthusiastic, thorough radical—admits, in his Social Compact, that it is impossible to subject men to the most democratic form of civil government which can be devised, without distributing them into ranks, classes and orders. But such a distribution must of necessity produce numerous inequalities in society. The terms ruler and subject, master and servant, parent and child, pupil and preceptor, designate relations, whose very essence is inequality in prerogative, dominion, power and privileges.

It is admitted by all logicians, that a doctrine, from which (when assumed as true) false propositions can be fairly inferred, must itself be false. Let us apply this test to the case before us. Let it be granted that all men should be on terms of perfect equality in all the intercourse of society. Then, it would be a grievous wrong, under any circumstances, to subject one

man to the will or dominion of another. Then, civil government is an outrageous usurpation. Then, all rulers are tyrants, oppressors and robbers. Then, it is wicked for one man to possess more learning or property than his neighbor. For the same reason, it would be an infringement of human rights to send your children to school; because, in all seminaries of learning there must be a superior power. Contumacious, disobedient, refractory pupils, must be restrained and punished. From the same principle it follows, that parents have no right to control and direct their children, in their young, tender and inexperienced years.

Or, in other words, the doctrine that all men are absolutely equal, is utterly irreconcilable with the existence of society and subordination among men, and must therefore be false. A more senseless sophism was never broached. Admit the principle, and act upon it in any community under heaven, and you would divest it, at once, of all the countless and precious blessings of civilized life.

But, you may say, granting the accuracy of the above representation, it does not prove that there is any inequality among men of such a nature and magnitude as to justify slavery. To this suggestion I reply, in the first place, that the scriptures have forever settled the abstract question, whether it is possible for one man to be so far inferior to another that his superior may lawfully treat him as a slave. They have given an affirmative answer to this interrogatory.

In the second place, I remark that the legislature

of Louisiana has solemnly decided that the Africans now living within our borders are, in general, so far inferior to the white population, that their own happiness, and the public safety require, that they should be held in a state of bondage. Let it not be forgotten, that, according to the scriptures, the only tribunal in any land competent to try this point is the legislative power. The legislature must say who are to occupy the condition of slaves under their jurisdiction. To their mandate we must all bow. Their decision, I admit, should be in accordance with justice and benevolence. With respect to the community in which our lot is cast, I have no hesitation in affirming, that the laws regulating slavery are, in the main, wise, merciful and salutary. What says the New Testament? It says, touching this matter, of bondage, *ye must not resist the civil authorities, lest the name of God and his doctrine be blasphemed.*

2d. Again, it is alleged to be a decision of reason, *that man cannot be justly held and used as property.* It is a shocking offence against the laws of right to traffic in human beings.

Upon what ground does the assertion rest? Man, say our opponents, sustains a peculiar and intimate relation to the Maker of the universe. Sacred Writ informs us, that the image of God is impressed on his soul; that he is endued with high and glorious perfections; that he possesses the hope and the capacity of a never-ending existence beyond the grave. Can it be lawful to buy and sell—to hold and use as property, beings with such exalted endowments—enriched with a rational, moral, and immortal nature?

I answer, that the phrase, "Image of God" as used in the Old Testament conveys to our minds no clear, definite ideas. The ablest commentators differ in their views, as to the interpretation of these words. In one sense, it may be said that the image of God has been inscribed upon every thing which his hand has formed. The minutest particle of dust, every atom, every blade of grass, every flower, every vegetable and animal, as well as the human body and soul present the most interesting manifestations of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness. There is not an article of merchandize in all the commercial world, but what exhibits proofs of the being and attributes of an Eternal Mind. All created things wear his image and superscription. If you adopt the principle, that whatever has the image of God cannot lawfully be bought and sold, then to be consistent, you must put your veto upon every species of traffick. The whole business of buying and selling must be forever relinquished. *To buy, is to acquire the property, right or title to any thing, by paying a consideration, or an equivalent in money.* Now it is perfectly obvious, that there is no species of property the right to which one may not lawfully obtain by purchase.

But it may be said, that the human body and soul cannot justly be regarded in the light of property. It is not necessary to examine this question. When I purchase a slave, I acquire the right to nothing but his labor during a part of his time—during a certain number of hours each day. No one will say that human labor is a thing too sacred to be offered in the market. Mens labor is bought and sold every day, all

over the civilized world. Magistrates, judges, jurors, lawyers, physicians, clergymen, teachers, mechanics, merchants, and those employed in agriculture, all receive pecuniary compensation for their services. That is, they sell themselves. They do not indeed barter away their bodies and souls, their lives, their limbs and members, their intellectual and moral powers, but simply and solely their services for a stipulated definite period. So the master does not pretend to possess a title to the body and soul of his slave, but simply to enjoy the benefit of his labor, during a term of years, for a fair and reasonable compensation. The master sustains the same relation to his domestics, that the commander of a vessel does to the crew—an officer of the army to the soldiers under him, or a mechanic to the apprentices who are under his control and supervision.

It will perhaps be alleged, that the case of the slave differs from those above mentioned, inasmuch as he is not permitted to sell himself, but is disposed of without his own consent. I do not deny this difference. I only say, that property in slaves consists essentially in nothing but a right to their labor for a limited time. This position cannot be disputed. Whether compulsory labor is ever lawful is another, but not doubtful point. When this city was invaded by the English army a few years ago, some of you remember, that every citizen capable of bearing arms, was compelled to labor, without his consent, for the defence of New Orleans. Was this right. Undoubtedly. For every citizen, in a certain sense, belongs to the community in which he lives, and on particular emergencies this

community may oblige him to labor for the public good. That is, every civil government is, in some respects, the owner of its subjects, and may rightfully hold, and use them as property.

Again, condemned criminals in your state-prison, are forced to labor so many hours every day. The government of Louisiana rightfully holds and treats them as slaves.

Minors and apprentices also must work for their superiors without their own consent, or contract. For a term of years they are slaves.

Take another case. Those persons in a community who are too imbecile, inefficient and unreflecting to govern themselves, may be disposed of by the legislative power. This is done throughout the civilized globe. I have seen such people sold at auction, in the state of Massachusetts. Tutors, masters or guardians are appointed over them, in obedience to whose command they are compelled to labor for a stipulated remuneration. This is precisely the condition of the African in the Southern States. The civil authority is forced to take care of him and to keep him employed, in order to save him from self-destruction and from being detrimental to the peace and welfare of society at large. And for so doing, we are accused of inflicting a "grievous wrong" upon the poor slave. It is a "grievous wrong" to protect, feed and clothe, those who are unable to feed, clothe and protect themselves. Finally, God has said in the Scriptures, that it is just under certain circumstances, to hold and use man as property. From such a judgement there can be no appeal. To the legis-

lature alone it belongs to decide, what description of persons must be so far restricted in their freedom, as to be doomed to perpetual servitude for life. Nor is there, the least reason to apprehend, that the legislators of the Southern States will fail of acting in regard to this subject on the most liberal, generous and philanthropic principles.

3rd. It is affirmed, that the principles of natural justice condemn the practice of subjecting one man to another's *irresponsible will and power*. But such a subjection is indispensable to the maintenance of civil government. Even in the purest republics there is an arbitrary, sovereign, irresponsible power; the will of the majority. So in every family, and in every school, an absolute monarch rules and commands. In Louisiana, above the supreme court, there is no higher arbiter to hear our complaints, or redress our wrongs. In this tribunal you see a tremendous power, that is strictly irresponsible, and which none of us can resist, but at our peril. Absolute power is an ingredient in every form of government existing on earth. Society cannot subsist without it, any more than a superstructure can be reared without a foundation.

But it is contended, that the power of the master over the servant should be so far restrained by law as to deny him the right of inflicting punishment according to his sovereign will and pleasure. This view of the subject I formerly adopted myself. But however beautiful in theory, it cannot be made to work well, when put in practice: The number of slaves that require corporal chastisement, is compa-

ratively small. Probably not one in an hundred above the age of childhood ever needs to be subjected to the infliction of stripes. But cases sometimes occur, when servants must be controlled, curbed, and disciplined, by violent measures. On such emergencies, punishment must be summary and immediate, in order to produce any beneficial results. Any other mode of chastisement would involve the necessity of a legal process, protracted, expensive, impracticable and inefficient. Slave-holders in the Southern States are in the main, the most mild, merciful and benignant class of men that I have ever met with. They treat their slaves with paternal kindness. It is commonly thought at the North, that slave-holders are inclined to be hard hearted, tyrannical, oppressive and unjust. The very reverse is the case. If the truth could be made to appear on this subject, it would be seen that there is more cruel treatment towards children and minors in any one of our free states, for a given term, than is inflicted upon servants in any of the slave-holding states for the same period. During a residence of seventeen years in Louisiana, I have not seen as much of that kind of conduct which is adapted to give pain to a sensitive, benevolent heart, as I witnessed during half a dozen years of my school-boy existence in Massachusetts. Cruelty to servants is forbidden by our laws. An enlightened selfishness is of itself sufficient to lead the master to a just and humane treatment of his dependants; for when thus treated, they are always found to be more industrious, orderly and profitable. The fact is, that public opinion here is so stern against

inhumanity to servants, that few slave-holders have sufficient hardihood to set it at defiance.

4th. Ingenious attempts are made to show, that all men have certain sacred and unalienable rights, of which slavery is the infraction. It is impossible to organize a society on such principles that all its members shall possess the same, or equal rights. Look, for an example, to the free inhabitants of the State of Massachusetts, whose boast is that her soil is uncontaminated by slavery. Do they all enjoy the same political rights? Is not more than half of her entire population disfranchised? Are her females, minors and paupers permitted to go to the polls? Can they be elevated to office by the suffrages of free, enlightened citizens? The ladies of Massachusetts have no political liberty. In this respect, they are reduced to the level of our slaves. Is it right that they should be made ineligible to office? Is it right that they should have no voice in choosing their rulers; nor in making those laws which control their lives, possessions and happiness? I have not time, nor is this the place for the investigation of these topics. But, doubtless, the wise men of the North would agree in the decision that minors should be denied the privilege of voting, and of being elevated to places of responsibility in the commonwealth, on the ground that they are destitute of the proper qualifications.—A child six years old wants the knowledge requisite to enable him to discharge the duties of public office. It is doing him no injustice to say, that he shall not be summoned to the performance of a task for which he has no suitable faculties. It is universally admit-

ted, that infamy; mental alienation, want of learning, dotage, and other causes, may render a person incompetent to fill an office or transact public business. Now, in the matter of civil rights, we do not place the African upon a footing of equality with the white man, because he can neither understand, appreciate, nor exercise these rights. To a slave, who has never learned to read or write, there are insuperable obstacles in the way of his becoming an eminent lawyer, divine, or statesman. Equally insurmountable impediments obstruct his introduction to the rights of civil freedom. God and nature forbid it.

In my judgment, the Southern States secure to the slave all the rights and privileges of which he is at present capable. He is richly remunerated for his labor. There is no class of operatives in the civilized world, all things considered, so well paid as our slaves. Nothing that I can see, is wanting to fit them for the joys of time, nor for the purer and higher joys of an eternal existence. There is scarcely an African in the State of Louisiana belonging to a master, who does not receive what may be considered equivalent to a sum lying between the extremes of one hundred and fifty and two hundred and fifty dollars a year, at the lowest computation.—The southern bond-men and bond-women are much more eligibly situated, in regard to the means of comfortable living, (food, lodging, raiment, &c.) than the great majority of day laborers throughout Great Britain, or even the northern section of the United States.

But when we affirm, that the slave is in a happier

condition than the free laborer at the North, we are told, this is impossible, "for happiness can never belong to those, who are deprived of the distinctive attributes of a man." "If he appear gay, it is because he has not learned to think ; because he is too fallen to feel his wrongs; because he wants just self-respect." (See Channing's pamphlet). But permit me to inquire, what are we to understand by the phraseology "the distinctive attributes of man?" The Doctor himself has furnished an answer to this question. He tells us in his election sermon, in substance, (for I do not remember his words,) that the most glorious prerogative of man is freedom from impure, foolish, and wicked thoughts; that no captivity is so ignominious and dreadful as the dominion of sinful appetites and passions. Others cannot enslave us. They may put a gag upon our mouths, but they cannot stop our thoughts. They may incarcerate the body, and chain it to the floor of a dungeon. But the real man—the mind may still be free; may still exercise the noblest prerogative of humanity, and in the unbounded region of its own thoughts, hold sweet communion with God, and expatriate, at will, o'er the illimitable fields of truth and duty. How just is this description! How beautiful! He enjoys the most precious attribute of man, who can turn his mind, by a resolute effort of his will, from thoughts of evil to thoughts of good, from falsehood to truth, from frivolous and vain, to honorable and useful employment. All this, the slave is at liberty to do. Multitudes of them are, to a high degree, conscientious, morally, religiously free and happy. The Doctor himself then

being Judge, our slaves are not bereft of the distinguishing privileges of man. They share in the most important rights that belong to their masters. They have the liberty of obeying Christ.

Again: Doctor Channing informs us, that among the most precious rights of humanity, is the "right to labor;" "to work with our own hands." From systematic and reasonable toil flow abundance, health, peace, contentment and virtue. Now this right belongs to the slave in its most perfect and inviolate form.

Once more: slaves possess the inappreciable benefits which grow out of the endearing ties of friendship, kindred, sympathy, and the whole class of domestic affections. Parents and children, husbands and wives (it is true), are sometimes separated by being involved in those calamities which sweep away the possessions and prosperity of the master. But take it all in all, they are as free and undisturbed in the enjoyment of their domestic relations, as the white inhabitants of the Northern States.

The slaves of Louisiana are, in all essential respects, as free as the female population of Massachusetts. In common with our fair sisters, at the North, they are cut off from the exercise of the political franchise, and the employments of public life. But in the private sphere marked out for them, they may taste the purest bliss of earth, and be an ornament, a light and blessing to all within their influence. Doctor Channing migh', with just as much propriety, say, concerning the ladies of his state, as of our slaves, "that they have not learned to think;" "that they are



too fallen to feel their wrongs;" and that they are deficient in just self-respect ; because forsooth they are not permitted to go to the polls, or to become candidates for public offices.

I can assure Dr. Channing that good slaves in Louisiana (and the majority are good) know how to respect themselves, and are respected and beloved by all around them. I have never met with a class of people more esteemed and honored than those slaves at the South who are docile, submissive, obedient, industrious, honest, and faithful to their masters.

Besides, when you affirm, that slaves do not know "how to think;" to "feel their wrongs;" "nor respect themselves;" you virtually declare that they are disqualified to hold the station of freemen; that they are fit for no condition save that of bondage.

That kind of servitude, which Dr. Paley denominates slavery, has existed in every period of time and in every part of the world. You cannot point to a community, now existing, on this, or the other side of the Atlantic, where persons are not *compelled to labor*, for the benefit of others, without their own consent. No matter in what this compulsion originates; in the law of the legislature; or the destitute condition of a dependent, suffering, half starved family. Those under its dominion, are slaves. Look at the condition of laborers in Great Britain, where so much noise is made concerning the horrors and injustice of domestic slavery in the United States. An English writer of eminence, give us the following sketch of the degradation and wants of a peasant in that land, which fills the world with the loud boast, "that as

soon as a slave touches her soil, his fetters fall off, and he stands forth, redeemed, ransomed, disenthralled by the genius of *universal emancipation*."

"Who is that defective being, with calfless legs and stooping shoulders, weak in body and mind, inert, pusillanimous and stupid, whose premature wrinkles and furtive glance tell of misery and degradation! That is an English peasant, or pauper; for the words are synonymous. His sire was a pauper, and his mothers milk wanted nourishment. From infancy his food has been bad, as well as insufficient; and he now feels the pain of unsatisfied hunger nearly whenever he is awake. But half clothed, and never supplied with more warmth than suffices to cook his scanty meal, cold and wet come to him, and stay by him with the weather. He is married of course; for to this he would have been driven by the poor laws, even if he had been, as he never was, sufficiently comfortable and prudent to dread the burden of a family. But though instinct, and the overseer have given him a wife, he is a stranger to the joys of a husband and father! His partner and his little ones, like himself, often hungry, seldom warm, sometimes sick without aid, and always sorrowful without hope, are greedy, selfish, and vexing; so, to use his own expression, he hates the sight of them, and resorts to his hovel, only because a hedge affords less shelter from the wind and rain. Compelled by parish law to support his family, which means to join them in consuming an allowance from the parish, he frequently conspires with his wife to get that allowance increased, or prevent its being diminished. This brings beggars, trick-

ery and quarrelling, and ends in settled craft. Though he have the inclination, he wants the courage to become, like more energetic men of his class, a poacher, or smuggler on a large scale, but he pilfers occasionally, and teaches his children to lie and steal. His subdued and slavish manners towards his great neighbors, shews that they treat him with suspicion and harshness. Consequently, he at once dreads and hates them; but he will never harm them by violent means. Too degraded to be desperate, he is only thoroughly depraved. His miserable career will be short; rheumatism and asthma are conducting him to the work-house; where he will breathe his last without one pleasant recollection, and so make room for another wretch, who may live and die in the same way!" This description he tells us may apply to millions in the British empire.

To the general truth of this statement intelligent Englishmen now living among us, (some of whom I see in this congregation,) have given their attestation. Beyond all doubt then there is at this moment, more slavery in England than in all the United States. Suppose the degraded peasantry of that land, of whom mention is made in the above quotation, were transported to this country, and settled upon plantations where they might be certain of enjoying all the means of comfortable living to the end of their days; on the simple condition of being subjected to the necessity of regular, moderate, and healthy toil, would not such a change result in elevating them much higher than they now are in the scale of intelligence, refinement and virtue? May we not recommend to

the serious consideration of English philanthropists these words of Sacred Writ, "*For if any provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own household, he has denied the faith, and is worse than infidel. Physician, heal thyself.*" Let the people of England, in the first place, pay a due attention to their own affairs. Let them direct their united and vigorous efforts towards meliorating the condition of the suffering, impoverished, and immoral millions at home, instead of wasting their sympathies and resources upon visionary projects that relate to foreign and distant parts over which it is not possible for them to exert any salutary influence. The same advice might be given to our philanthropic brethren of the North. There is a foolish, impudent, disgusting intermeddling with the affairs of our neighbors, in many of the charitable and benevolent enterprises of the present day. Suppose Great Britain were to labor for the next fifty years, and with all her energies to improve the state of her own poor, vicious, and afflicted subjects, not, at the expiration of that time, would her peasantry and bondmen be as well off as the slave laborers of the Southern States now are. Example, as all admit—silent, unpretending, noiseless example—is the most efficient mode of instruction. Let those who would do us good, take care to set us an edifying example of social order, peace, equality and happiness. Let the Northern States first busy themselves in emancipating their own slaves, then with greater propriety may they proffer to us their advice, sympathy, and co-operation. For if the being compelled to labor for another is the true definition of

bondage, excepting Rhode Island and Delaware, there are more slaves in any one of the free Northern States, than in Louisiana. I do not take the position, that the oppressed and suffering condition of millions in other lands, may be alleged as a valid reason for our holding the African in bondage. The wrong committed by *others* can furnish no apology or defence for *our* unrighteousness. I simply say, that there is no civilized nation on earth, within whose borders may not be found multitudes sunk far below our slaves in want, toils, sorrows, and degradation ; and that it is a dictate alike of common sense and the Christian religion, that, "charity should begin at home."

Nearly every argument against slavery, which I have seen in print, for the last twenty years, is founded upon the evils which have grown out of the abuse of this institution. Masters sometimes treat their slaves badly. There are cases in which they are worked beyond their strength, furnished with inadequate accommodations, and subjected to unmerciful punishments. These rare and detached instances of inhumanity are brought forward to show, that the institution itself, is, of necessity, a pure and unmixed evil. But such a mode of reasoning is utterly fallacious. Fathers sometimes impose unreasonable tasks upon their sons, make insufficient provision for their food and raiment, and practice the most shocking cruelties towards them. There are numerous infelicities in the department of connubial life. In the profession of the healing art, quacks, pretenders, and charlatans commit fearful depredations upon the health and lives of their fellow beings. Children not unfrequently re-

ceive cruel punishments from their preceptors. What, then? Shall we attempt to get along without marriage, without physicians, and without schools for our children? No. Neither will we aim at the abolition of the tie that unites master and servant. We must endeavor to remove the evils of life without assailing those relations essential to the very existence of society. Let masters adopt that treatment towards their servants which the New Testament enjoins, and all the evils now charged upon slavery, would fade out of the picture of human woe.

The accounts published at the North, and in Europe, concerning the actual condition of the slave in the Southern States, are full of errors. At the best, they present but imperfect and distorted pictures of the truth, that have not as much resemblance to reality as is commonly looked for in a caricature. In ninety-nine cases in a hundred, the conduct of the master to the slave is distinguished by the most exemplary humanity. He looks upon them as members of his family, as wards and dependents on his kindness, for whose well-being, in every way, he is deeply responsible. Nearly all masters know and feel, that undue severity to their slaves is bad policy; that it tends to make them unprofitable to their owners, discontented and wretched in their minds, and a burthen and a nuisance to all around them. The principle of selfishness itself is enough to induce the master, in a great majority of instances, to treat his slave with tenderness and justice.

If we are to credit the statements made in Miss Martineau's late work on American society, there is

not an evil in the Southern States, but what must fairly be ascribed to slavery. When travelling through these sunny regions, she saw of course many exhibitions of human depravity. We have our share of vulgarity, ignorance, base passion, and low vice. We suffer many evils from selfishness, dishonesty, and strife—from intemperance, libertinism, gambling, and crime. Now Miss Martineau collects and concentrates into one dark, saddening portrait, all the thousand forms, diversities, and shadings of sin which she witnessed at the South, and then pointing her readers to it, exclaims, behold a just representation of the countless miseries inflicted by slavery. Nearly all foreigners who have published any thing concerning our society, have run into the same error. Their criticisms upon our sins and deficiencies are declamatory, vague, indiscriminating and abusive. Is there but a single cause of moral depravation operating among the inhabitants of the slave-holding States ? Were our slaves immediately to be set free, would all the sins that now infest our peace, be at once removed ? Would emancipation of itself, turn the South into a paradise ; make all the avaricious among us, liberal ; the intemperate, self-governed ; the ignorant, learned ; the vulgar, refined ; and the wicked, good ? Are not the inhabitants of the free States, taken in the mass, exceedingly sinful ? If what their own moralists and divines say about them, be taken as true, the depravity of the people at the North, is great, general, dreadful and unprecedented. Now, what is it, let me inquire, that makes our Northern brethren so horribly wicked ? Not what they call slavery ; for it does not

exist among them. According to their own concession, then, there are other things besides bondage that have power to fill a community with moral evil. The popular accounts of the immoralities of slavery, are ridiculously false and extravagant. I do not believe that the laboring, dependent classes of Europe, or the Northern States, are a whit more decent or moral, than the majority of our slaves. In almost every newspaper published in the Northern cities, we read shocking descriptions of the vicious, idle, disorderly and atrocious conduct of the colored persons living among them. But are not these colored persons free? Neither the lash, nor the cruelties of the Southern nabob, are among the causes of their contamination.

It is a prevalent opinion, that the African slave in the United States, is of course, an oppressed, wronged and injured member of the human family. But the majority of Southern planters believe otherwise.—They think, that the African among them has as much freedom, and as many privileges, as he is capable of using to advantage. The Governor of a sister State, in one of his public messages, expresses the opinion, “that slavery has done more to elevate a degraded race in the scale of humanity; to tame the savage; to civilize the barbarous; to soften the ferocious; to enlighten the ignorant, and to spread the blessings of Christianity among the heathen, than all the missionaries that philanthropy and religion have ever sent forth.” Yet, unquestionable as this is, and though human ingenuity may be taxed in vain, to devise any other means by which these blessings could have been conferred, yet a sort of sensibility which would be only

mawkish and contemptible, if it were not mischievous, effects still to weep over the wrongs of 'injured Africa.' Can there be a doubt of the immense benefit which has been conferred on the race, by transferring them from their native, dark and barbarous regions, to the American Continent and Islands? There, three-fourths of the race are in a state of the most deplorable personal slavery. And those who are not, are in a scarcely less deplorable condition of political slavery, to barbarous chiefs, who value neither life nor any other human right; or enthralled by priests to the most abject and atrocious superstitions." A late traveller in the western parts of Africa, gives the following testimony: "The wild African is the child of passion, unaided by one ray of religion or morality to direct his course; in consequence of which, his existence is stained with every crime that can debase human nature to a level with the brute creation. Who can say that the slaves in our colonies are such? Are they not, in comparison with their savage brethren, enlightened beings? Is not the West Indian negro greatly indebted to his master for making him what he is—for having raised him from the state of debasement in which he was born, and placed him amid the blessings of civilized society? How can he repay him? He is possessed of nothing—the only return in his power is servitude. The man who has seen the wild African roaming in his native woods, and the well fed, happy looking negro of the West Indies, may perhaps be able to judge of their comparative happiness: the former, I suspect, would be glad to change his state of boasted freedom, starvation and disease;

to become, the slave of sinners and the commisera-
tion of saints."

Now, the general accuracy of the views contained in the above quotations, would be, I presume, admitted even by the abolitionists themselves. The comfort and well-being of the African are infinitely enhanced by a removal from his native soil, to the condition of bondage, which he occupies in the American States. Supposing then slavery to be wrong in principle, it must be a gratifying thought to the philanthropist, that its results are, in many respects, of an auspicious character.

I have not a doubt but that Almighty God in his wise providence, has permitted and brought about the present servile condition of the Africans in christian lands, as one of the means indispensable to the deliverance of their native country from barbarism, darkness and crime, and the final exaltation of its degraded millions to the knowledge, order, safety, refinement, pure morality and rational religion, which are enjoyed by civilized and christian nations.

It is worthy of observation, that there is at the present time a great unanimity of opinion among the wise and good, concerning the subject of slavery. All agree that he, "who cannot see a brother, a child of God, a man possessing the rights of humanity, under a darker skin than his own, wants the vision of a Christian. He worships the outward. The Spirit is not yet revealed to him. To look unmoved on the degradation and wrongs of a fellow-creature, because he happens to be burned by a fiercer sun, proves us strangers to justice and love in those universal forms,

which characterize Christianity. 'The greatest of all distinctions, the only enduring one—is moral goodness, virtue, religion. Outward distinction cannot arrive to the dignity of this. The wealth of worlds is not sufficient for a burnt-offering on this altar. A being capable of this, is invested by God with solemn claims on his fellow-creatures; and to exclude millions of such beings from our sympathy, because of outward disadvantages, proves, that in whatever else we surpass them, we are not their superiors in Christian virtue."

Now, remarks like these are mere truisms, which every man, woman and child can comprehend. There is but one creed on the subject of slavery. It is universally admitted, that in all cases, our treatment of others should be dictated by the spirit of Christian forbearance, equity and love. The only point open for debate, is the question—what constitutes such treatment? What duties does Christianity enjoin upon us in regard to domestic slavery? No doubt all should be permitted to go free, who are capable of self-government. No doubt is entertained, with respect to the rectitude and the policy of raising all throughout this land, who are qualified for it, to the enjoyment of political rights and privileges. It is admitted, also, that every legislature should be actuated by the supreme desire to promote, so far as they are able, the freedom and happiness of all that live under their dominion. These are self-evident propositions. Their truth is beyond all controversy. And you may fill newspapers, periodicals, pamphlets and volumes with beautiful dissertations on these elementary prin-

gard to this matter of slavery. You want the necessary information. No reading, no study, can furnish you for the task. You must live among slaves for years; accurately observe and scrutinize their daily developements and conduct, before you can be competent to decide upon the position which they are fitted to occupy in society. Twenty-one years ago, when I first came to the Southern States, (where I have lived ever since), I was in theory an abolitionist. I thought that nothing, but a blind, obstinate, unrighteous regard to "filthy lucre," kept the African in bondage. But experience has long since convinced me of my error. I now feel certain, that by emancipating our slaves, we should be guilty of the greatest injustice. For such a course we should richly merit the abhorrence of an enlightened world, and the indignation of offended Heaven. We dare not manumit our slaves. It would be an act of unmixed oppression, wrong, cruelty, robbery and murder. In the perusal of the more recent anti-slavery publications, I have been forcibly struck, with the utter ignorance which their authors evince in regard to the real character of Southern slaves. If they had any profound, philosophical, correct views of this character, they would feel it to be a dictate of Christianity that our colored population should live and die in servitude.

There are many other topics connected with this subject, which I had intended to notice, but my time has run out, and your patience is exhausted. I must stop. An adequate discussion of slavery would fill many volumes. From what has been said, I think it must appear obvious to all present that slavery is

nowhere condemned, or prohibited by the Scriptures of the Old or New Testament, and that under certain circumstances, (which circumstances, we believe, are now actually existing in the Southern states) it is in perfect keeping with the pure principles of that invaluable system of government under which we are permitted to live and flourish; and which, I have no doubt, is destined to elevate us to the highest degree of knowledge, order, peace and safety, that civilized society is capable of enjoying. We are perfectly willing that our Northern friends should freely express their opinions on the subject, provided they address themselves not to the slave, but to his master only. We will direct a becoming attention to their arguments and expostulations. We ask of them this favor only, that they would use no weapons in this warfare but those of persuasion, truth and love; and that they would maintain inviolate the right which the federal constitution has vested in the slave-holding states, of treating slavery in the manner which seems to them most just, kind and expedient.

It is apprehended by many that the discussion of this subject will endanger the peace and welfare of the nation; that it will finally excite between the Northern and Southern states an irreconcilable spirit of distrust and hatred, leading to overt acts of revenge, murder, war and devastation. The tie of our federal union (said a learned and judicious friend to me the other day, speaking in reference to this very topic,) is but a rope of sand, a mere cobweb. We shall, in all probability, live to see the downfall of this republic.

I cannot sympathize with those, who cherish such gloomy views concerning the future progress of these States in respectability and greatness. When I reflect upon the vast extent of our territory, (reaching from the great lakes to the gulf of Mexico, and from the Atlantic to the Pacific); upon the unprecedented fertility of its soil; its inexhaustible riches in the mineral, vegetable and animal departments; the salubrity of its climate; its wonderful facilities for commerce and inter-communication; the unity that pervades its inhabitants in language, literature, religious and political institutions; their general intelligence, industry and enterprize; I cannot but feel that our means of national prosperity are infinite; that the interests of the different sections of the United States are substantially the same; forever and inseparably united by the indissoluble, eternal bonds of physical and moral character, condition and circumstances.

Wise and good men among us, as it seems to me, are often wanting in a just appreciation of the value of our republican institutions; in a due acknowledgement of the wisdom and benignity of the Intelligent Cause, which obviously superintended their formation and settlement. Does not our country, at the present moment, enjoy an unparalleled state of prosperity? Are not increasing efforts put forth for the dissemination of that knowledge requisite to enable the people to understand their rights and happiness? Is not the freedom of the Press preserved as inviolable now, as at any former period? Were our literary and charitable institutions ever before fostered with such munificent patronage, as at the present day? Is not

every desirable improvement projected, encouraged and carried forward in this country, on a scale noble, disinterested and magnificent? What ground, then, for fears as to the perpetuity of our government? What reasons to indulge dismal forebodings, with regard to the Vessel of State? Why attempt to impress the people with the belief, that with all our invaluable rights and privileges, she is soon to be dashed against the rocks, or engulfed by the billows of a mighty sea of corruption?

If, in our opinion, such be the melancholy destiny that awaits us, we must look back upon the noble and magnanimous fathers of our Independence, as having sacrificed their wealth, ease, sacred honor and life, in the prosecution of an impracticable, visionary object; as having bequeathed to us a legacy absolutely worthless, invested with an ephemeral existence only; a fabric of government, before the expiration of one hundred years prematurely hoary with age; tottering on the verge of final and hopeless ruin. Were I not permitted to believe, that these unfavorable predictions relative to the stability of our precious institutions, were nothing more than the effusions of disappointed, murmuring, splenetic ambition, in despair, I should bid adieu even to the hopes of the ultimate exaltation of a man to millenial freedom and perfection. I should conclude, that a despotic government, under which the happiness of the many is sacrificed to the caprice, pleasure and aggrandizement of the few, is destined to grind and debase the human family to the end of time.

I have entire confidence in the good principles,

wisdom and patriotism of our Northern brethren generally. One of their able writers on slavery says—"We must not by rashness and passion expose the slave-holding states to peril. To instigate the slave to insurrection is a crime for which no rebuke, and no punishment, can be too severe. This would be to involve both slave and master in one common ruin. It is not enough to say that the constitution is violated by any action endangering the slave-holding portion of our country. A higher law than the constitution forbids this unholy interference. Were our national union dissolved, we ought to reprobate, as sternly as we now do, the slightest manifestation of a disposition to stir up a servile war. Still more, were the free and the slave-holding states not only separated, but engaged in the fiercest hostilities, the former would deserve the abhorrence of the world and the indignation of Heaven, were they to resort to insurrection and massacre as means of victory. Better were it for us to bare our own breasts to the knife of the slave, than to arm him with it against his master. It is not by personal, direct action on the mind of the slave that we can do him good.—Our concern is with the free." (See Channing on Slavery.)

With the exception of an inconsiderable number of fanatics, the above quotation expresses the prevailing views of the North on this momentous and exciting topic. I think the sentiments of the leading men in the free states come to us much distorted and misrepresented. I repeat it, I have unlimited confidence in our Northern brethren; in their wisdom,

their integrity, their forbearance, their noble and inextinguishable love of country. They are, in heart, opposed to nothing but what is wrong, wicked and injurious to the interests of humanity. On the matter of slavery, I believe that they are laboring under a gross hallucination. But let us exercise towards them a mild, patient long-suffering and tolerant spirit, as the best possible means of bringing them to a just perception of the error, that now blinds their judgment. We have nothing to fear. Truth is great and will prevail. If slavery is wrong, it must fade away before the resistless march of civilization and christianity. On the other hand, if, as I verily believe, the relation of master and servant originated in the will of God, and is sanctioned by the christian religion, it will last to the end of time. All its evils will soon disappear from the picture of human woe; and then the institution will be the source of the most amiable, endearing, permanent and useful affections of which our nature is susceptible. In the future, more improved and brilliant periods of our beloved republic, I have no doubt, that slavery, purged from all its impurities, will flourish, and form one of the most efficient bonds by which its inhabitants will be led to act, suffer, and sympathize as members of one vast and glorious family.

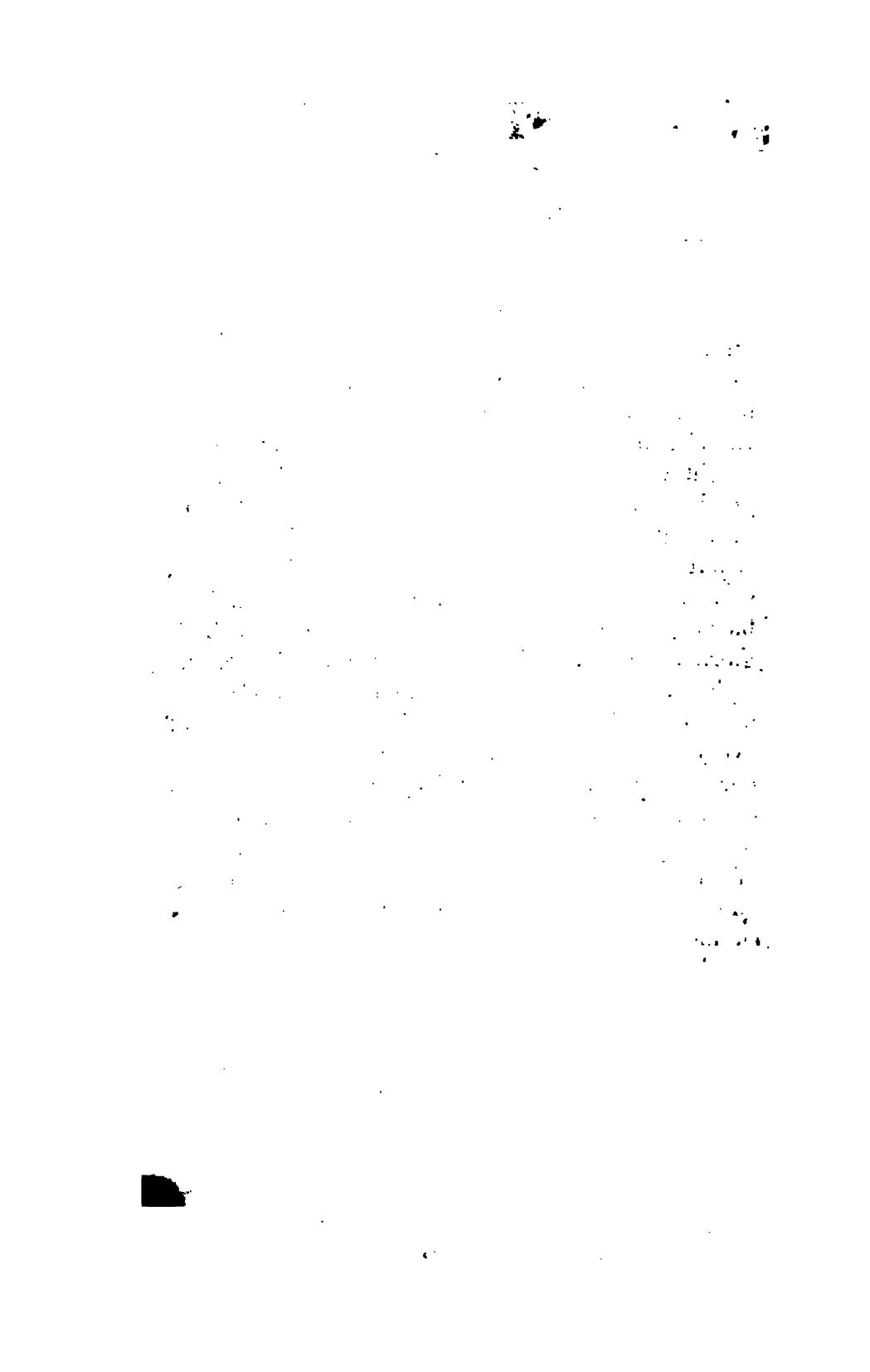
The apostle Paul, when urging upon the christian slaves at Corinth the duty of submission and contentment, bids them to bear in mind that the disadvantages of a servile state last but for a moment, and are to be succeeded by the pure and endearing joys of an immortal existence. "*The fashion of this world*

passeth away." If this thought were to animate the bosoms of all slaves, they would be happy and satisfied with their allotments. The object of New Testament preaching was not the emancipation of slaves, but their conversion to the faith and hopes of the gospel. Such should be the object of preachers at the present day. Let all christian teachers show our servants the importance of being submissive, obedient, industrious, honest and faithful to the interests of their masters. Let their minds be filled with sweet anticipations of rest eternal beyond the grave. Let them be trained to direct their views to that fascinating and glorious futurity, where the sins, sorrows and troubles of earth will be contemplated under the aspect of means indispensable to our everlasting progress in knowledge, virtue and happiness.

I would say to every slave in the United States, you should realize, that a wise, kind and merciful Providence has appointed for you, your condition in life. And all things considered, you could not be more eligibly situated. The burden of your care, toils and responsibilities is much lighter than that, which God has imposed on your Master. The most enlightened philanthropists, with unlimited resources, could not place you in a situation more favorable to your present and everlasting welfare, than that which you now occupy. You have your troubles. So have all. Remember how evanescent are the pleasures and joys of human life. Our fellow beings are rapidly moving off the stage, they retire behind the curtain, and are seen no more.

“The eternal surge
 Of time and tide rolls on, and bears afar
 Our bubbles; as the old burst, new emerge,
 Lashed from the foam of ages; while the graves
 Of empires heave, but like some passing wave.”

Lift your thoughts from this transient and mutable state to that heaven whose glories are unfading, which Jesus has prepared for his followers. If you are his sincere disciples, the more painful and humiliating the circumstances of your condition here, the more bright will be your immortal existence hereafter. Beyond the dark and dying struggle, man will be forever and completely free. The grave is the spot where he will lay down his weakness, his diseases, sorrows, and sins, that he may rise to a new and nobler existence in the realms of everlasting day. This glorious hope of “being finally *made alive in Christ*,” is the only true and inexhaustible fountain of happiness on earth. This fountain is accessible to all, of every name and description. All who taste of its pure pleasures, are substantially free and equal. All are travelling to the same exalted world, where happiness unalloyed will be our portion—where the ties of love and friendship are indissoluble—whose bright and enduring realities will never be dimmed by the clouds of sin or affliction.











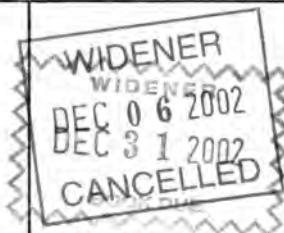


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